United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1444
28 July 1993

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council decides unanimously to extend UNIFIL mandate for six months to 31 January 1994; calls on all parties to cooperate fully with Force.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, expresses concern at violence in southern Lebanon; reaffirms its commitment to country's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity; says States should not threaten or use force against other States.

+ Secretary-General deplores Israeli bombing campaign in southern Lebanon; says attempt to displace civilian population may complicate Middle East peace process.

+ Israel, in letter to Security Council, says it has taken military action against terrorist bases in Lebanon in self-defence; says it is committed to Middle East peace process.

+ General Assembly admits Andorra as 184th Member of United Nations by acclamation.

+ Special Envoy for Haiti condemns attack on Senator Thomas Dupiton in Port-au-Prince; says incident shows urgent need for return of constitutional order.

+ Geneva talks to end war in Bosnia and Herzegovina make "steady progress"; Co-Chairmen of Yugoslavia Conference hold joint meeting with heads of delegations.

+ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, in address to Economic and Social Council, stresses importance of right to asylum; says concerted international action is needed to tackle refugee problem.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

* * *

The Security Council today decided unanimously to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for a further period of six months until 31 January 1994. It took that action by adopting resolution 852 (1993).

The Council reiterated its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. The Council re-emphasized UNIFIL's terms of reference and general guidelines as approved by resolution 425 (1978), and called on all parties concerned to cooperate fully with the Force for the full implementation of its mandate.

The Council also asked the Secretary-General to continue consultations with the Government of Lebanon and other parties directly concerned with the implementation of resolution 853 (1993) and to report to it on the results.

* * *

The Security Council, in a statement read out by its President, Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom), today reaffirmed its commitment to the full sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. The Council asserted that any State should refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Referring to its earlier extension of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the Council stressed the urgent need for implementation of resolution 425 (1978), which approved the Force's terms of reference and general guidelines, in all its aspects. The Council reiterated its full support for the Taif Agreement and for the continued efforts of the Lebanese Government to consolidate peace, national unity and security in the country. The Council also commended the Lebanese Government for its successful efforts to extend its authority in the south of the country in full coordination with UNIFIL.

The Council went on to express its concern at the continuing violence in southern Lebanon and its regret over the loss of civilian life, and urged all parties to exercise restraint.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed alarm that a major objective of the Israeli bombing campaign in Southern Lebanon was aimed at displacing the civilian population from villages in the area. In a statement issued today, he said that given the evolution of the situation in Lebanon, as well as the historic background of the Middle East conflict, it was deplorable that any Government would consciously adopt policies that would lead to the creation of new flows of refugees and displaced persons.

(more)

The Secretary-General said he was concerned that a continuation of the operation might further complicate the peace process, whose successful outcome was in the interest of all the parties.

* * *

Israel has said it has been carrying out military operations against bases belonging to Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations in Lebanon because those organizations have lately intensified their efforts to kill Israelis and to undermine the Middle East peace process. In a letter to the Security Council dated 26 July, Israel said it was exercising its legitimate right of self-defence so as to restore adequate security along its northern border.

Israel remained fully committed to the peace process, the letter stated. Military action had been taken only as a last resort to defend Israeli citizens and also to defend the peace process.

* * *

The General Assembly today decided by acclamation to admit the Principality of Andorra as a new Member State of the United Nations. The Assembly meeting was followed immediately by a flag-raising ceremony at Headquarters. Andorra's admission brings total membership of the Organization to 184.

* * *

The attempt last night on the life of Haitian Senator Thomas Dupiton in Port-au-Prince was condemned today by Dante Caputo, the Special Envoy for Haiti of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of American States. The Senator was lightly injured in the attack, but an innocent bystander was killed.

In a statement issued through a spokesman, Mr. Caputo rejected all acts of violence, irrespective of their origin, and said the incident once again demonstrated the urgent need for the return of constitutional order to Haiti. He also expressed his condolences to the victim's relatives.

* * *

Steady progress is being made at talks in Geneva to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to a United Nations spokesman. The talks, which began yesterday, are being chaired by Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

The Co-Chairmen met today with President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. The Co-Chairmen also met with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, and later had a joint meeting with the heads of all the delegations at the talks.

(more)

* * *

The right to seek and enjoy asylum must be upheld more strongly than ever, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata told the Economic and Social Council on Monday. She said it was disturbing to see some States adopting measures to prevent potential refugees from seeking asylum or to reject and return them without a proper hearing.

Introducing the UNHCR's annual report, Mrs. Ogata stressed that never before had concerted action by the international community been so critical for the resolution of conflicts or so necessary for forging a humanitarian response. UNHCR increasingly had to provide protection and assistance to refugees and displaced persons in situations of acute crisis or open conflict, whether in Africa, the former Soviet Union and the Balkans, or parts of Asia. In almost every case, the refugees were returning to countries which had been devasted by war, areas which were heavily mined or situations where the national reconciliation process was precarious and security fragile, she said.

* *** *